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Title: Need to relax rules for issuance of passports to persons not having marriage certificates in the country particularly in Tamil Nadu.

SHRI ABDUL RAHMAN (VELLORE): Hardship is being faced by the people of Tamil Nadu who apply for new passports if their marriages are not registered by the Registrar. Tamil Nadu is one of the States which enacted compulsory marriage registration act in 2009. However, there is no punitive action for this in the State. There is lack of awareness about it among people. However, if people apply for such registered marriage certificates along with marriage proof for the purpose of applying for passports, it is told that there is no provision in the act to apply after 90 days from the date of marriage. If such people apply for new passports or their renewal, all their applications are rejected by the authorities citing the reason that no marriage certificate is issued by the Registrar even though the marriage certificates traditionally been issued by the Local Administration of Masjids, Churches and Temples are attached.

Alternatively, as there is a common official procedure of producing marital proof all over the country in the form of a notarized joint photo affidavit, Passport Issuing Authority should accept such legal instruments irrespective of the States in the country. If this mode of submission is also rejected, there is no possibility at all for those who have not registered their marriages within the stipulated period of 90 days. While there is no punishment from the State administration for not registering the marriages, punishment is meted out by the passport administration in the form of rejection of their applications.

Therefore, immediate and appropriate action should necessarily be taken by the Ministry of External Affairs to ensure that the genuine passport applicants do not face such difficulties further.